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Land appraisal made by people with long experience with the capabilities of their soils under traditional methods of farming, fertilization, and land reclamation is very old in the culture. This in itself is a very significant fact about the culture aside from the obvious technical utility of a land classification system. Land classification is important as a tangible indication of wealth as appraised by representatives of the village. This classification is the basis of taxation of land. A grade two rice paddy pays a lower tax than a grade one. The system of land classification also provides a basis for estimating probable yields.

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Township officials are responsible for land classification on a township basis, but each village does its own. In Gushichan township (Hanashiro and Minatogawa) the elected mayor and his appointed subordinates and local farmers who know the land well have set up the system based on classes and grades of land. In Ginoza-son, the mayor performs a similar function. Since each village has its land classification, a table of correspondences makes possible the comparison of equivalent grades. A composite system for the township can then be made. Grade three rice land in Matsuda, for example, may be equivalent to grade two rice land in Ginoza village. By listing all these together, a village wide classification is made.

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The main classifications (tōkyū) of land found in all communities are: (1) Rice lands, (ta, tanbo), (2) dry crop land (hatake). It is very difficult to translate the word hatake. So far the expression dry crop land has been used. This land may be contrasted with the wet rice fields; it is dry farming land, usually on rolling slopes or upland. It is land used for cultivation of domestic plants except rice and one or two other minor crops. Rice and dry crop land are the two main classes. (3) Genya land. This word is also difficult to translate. It is variously rendered as wild or waste land, but it is neither wild nor wasteland in an economic sense. It is best described negatively as land not suited for cultivation. Despite its low value, it is important land for its production of grass, reeds, firewood and plant shoots for domestic animals. It is vital in land conservation. The genya land, sometimes on steep or gentle mountain slopes, sometimes cropping out in the midst of cultivated fields or rice paddies, with its dense growth of grass, its occasional pine tree or cycad effectively binds the soil and prevents disastrous run off and flash floods. Around the village of Hanashiro, genya land is rocky and most of its vegetation consists of grass with some shrubs. Before the war, this genya land had more pine and cycads than at present, and the disappearance of the cycad and pine furnished greater opportunity for the omnipresent miscanthus, though there are occasional regrowths of the pine. In Matsuda, the genya land often is indistinguishable from the forest. But the trees are less dense and the privately owned genya is interspersed with the small cultivated paddies and fields. (4) House sites (yashiki, takuchi). There are usually two classes: the first class site is convenient and on a main road or lane; the second class is inconvenient, a rear house, or one

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Land classification in Okinawa proceeds from the village to the township and then to the whole island. Each class of land in a village has its own grade. By combining these grades a township classification is made. This is done first by village committees determining the grades for each of their classes of land, and then by setting up a table of equivalences after discussion by the committee representing the whole township. Matsuda's first grade dry crop land might be considered by the land classification committee to be equal in quality to Ginoza village's second class land. While there might be only six classifications for any one village, when all these are combined, there may be ten grades for the township. This is shown by the table of correspondences for Matsuda and neighboring villages in Ginoza-son, as of November 1951.

In this illustration, Matsuda's first class rice land is considered second grade on a township wide basis; its sixth grade dry crop land is grade nine, and its first and second class houses are by comparison, grades three and four in the whole township.

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With minor variations, the procedures in classifying land are the same in both townships. Each village makes the classification of its own land. This is done by five villagers, chosen by the people for their knowledge and integrity. In Gushichan township, village experts are designated to serve on the township committee.⁸ Seven men from the villages are joined by the mayor (sonchō), the vice-mayor (joyaku), the trade and industry section head, the agricultural section head of the township office, a total of eleven men, who then determine the township classifications. These committees make inspections of doubtful cases, often after working hours. The field trips usually end up with a sake party.

[574]

In Ginoza-son essentially the same procedures are followed. Each village sends representatives, the number being determined by the area of the village. In late 1951, this village-wide committee had 24 members with the township mayor as chairman. Each village prepares its own land classification map. The local classifications, later combined to make a township-wide classification, have the advantage of limiting the range of grades in a small area and of comparing parcels close together.

Occasionally the grade of a plot is changed to correct an error or to make it consistent with an improvement. A new road may make a plot of land more accessible and thus change its grade.

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In all the villages studied, land classification was important for the same reasons: for tax purposes, for estimating future production, and for the individual farmer, a means of demonstrating tangible wealth.

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⁸ One representative each is chosen from the villages of Gushichan, Aragusuiku, Koshihara, and Nakaza villages, one from Oton and Hanashiro combined, one from Asato and Yosa combined, and one from Hinatogawa-ikku and Hinatogawa-niku combined.

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[465] tion, but the village receives payment, through the township, from the central government for this labor. In November 1951, the rate was ¥80 per day for each male, and ¥50 for each female. Married women do not participate, except to take the place of a husband who cannot attend. This community project is a continuation of pre-war custom. On the day set aside for this work, the participants are taken part way by truck or bus. A half hour walk over the paths, often leading through dense thickets, brings them to the site selected. Everyone brings his own lunch, perhaps in a little metal box, or merely wrapped in banana leaves. Around noon, the girls take their buckets, go down hill to the stream, and carry up the water for the tea. Weeds and grasses, especially miscanthus and the dwarf bamboo are cleared cut from the predominating shii and pine. A shii is known here as the shiigi or shiija. When work begins the area is almost an impenetrable thicket. The grasses and the thick dwarf bamboo have grown up in dense stands among the trees. Only these grasses are cut. Trees are not touched, except for the very young ones in overcrowded spots, or the malformed and dying trees. With the brush and grasses cut, the stand of trees is still dense.

[311] When the undergrowth has been cut down, one can walk through the area. The cuttings, as well as the litter on the forest floor, are not removed. This wise practice keeps the soils at least at their normal productivity. In this area, the relatively low density of population, the scattering of settlement, the large areas of forest compared with the cultivated areas have not brought about conditions requiring the removal of forest litter for fertilizing fields and for fuel, a practice which creates acute problems in Japan.⁹

• [32] The work is supervised by a forestry official living in the village but an employee of the township. His supervision is nominal, as everyone knows what is to be done and how to do it. Like all officials of a village, he is a friend, neighbor, or relative of those who participate. He checks off the names of those who have reported. On returning from the forest at five in the afternoon, most of the villagers bring back some wood, perhaps a long pole, a bunch of dwarf bamboo, or miscanthus to make an outdoor broom. They are lighthearted as they return single file along the winding paths back to the village.

[55] Pine cones are gathered for their seeds by the co-operative effort of the villagers. The cones are soaked in water so the seeds can be removed more easily. The village office takes the seeds, gives them to the township office which sells them to the central government for planting purposes. Once a year, the village receives 10% of the amount of seeds it collected for its own planting purposes.

9 A report on Japanese natural resources, as cited, 350.

575
[572] Friendships formed here and in school are the basis of later lifelong associations.

Young Women's Associations (joshiseinen) are not so well developed. Hanashiro has none. In Minatogawa the young men's and the young women's groups are combined. Matsuda has a separate organization of girls from 17 to 23. The latter age is considered the probable date of marriage, when the young woman will enter the Women's Association. Their duties parallel those of the young men: village maintenance, selling firewood, planting sugar cane, taking part in harvest ceremonies and participating with the young men in the New Year's party.

[368] In the villages, a volunteer organization is responsible for fire fighting. The fire brigades (sobodan) usually are under the direction of the young men's association. The village gong is sounded, the volunteers assemble, and the fire is put out by using a bucket brigade.

[177] Parent Teacher Associations, after the American model, have been formed in the rural area, but it is too early to form a judgment of their effectiveness.

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621 There are also the neighborhood associations. A village is divided into areas or zones (han), each with its own head (hanchō). Neighborhood groups had existed before the introduction of the Japanese neighborhood association (tonari gumi) in about 1935 or 1936. These older groups (kumi) had from 30 to 70 families, each with a head (kurichō). These groups often assisted in a family crisis, with housebuilding, or furnished pallbearers for a funeral.

Before and during the war, the Japanese used the neighborhood associations in their rationing, food distribution, civil defense, and other programs.

• [632] The neighborhood associations remained after the war, but they are now known as hans. The leader of each neighborhood group is a link in the chain of communication from the township office to the individual villager. The township mayor transmits a new regulation or a directive from a higher governmental authority to each village headman who informs the heads of each of the neighborhood groups, who can then tell the people living in his area. The people within a neighborhood group may also co-operate with one another in housebuilding. The young men may be pallbearers for a deceased resident of the neighborhood. The group head also informs the people of village meetings (jūkai). These heads may be elected, but usually they serve by rotation (kotai), with a change every three months. In Matsuda, the group head is selected for one year and household heads service under him for one month in rotation to perform stand-by (tōban suru, to be on duty) duties and help the neighborhood head in his work.

HANS

Harashiro	5
Minatogawa	9
Hatsuda	16

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The Democratic Government of the Township and Village

The description of local government has intentionally been delayed to this point because its operation and functions can be seen to greater advantage after an acquaintance with family life and the various forms of group activity. We can see it, not so much a formal structure to be described in legalistic terms, but as an expression of many of the characteristics of the culture we have already found in the family system, group activity, and individual leadership.

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Okinawa and the various smaller islands of the Central Ryukyus (Okinawa-gunto) is one of the four main political subdivisions of the chain. The gunto is divided into townships, and within each township, there are several settlements (buraku, ku, asa) which we have consistently called villages. Township government is the channel for the enforcement of laws and regulations from higher governmental agencies and the source of local measures which govern the several villages of the township.

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The seat of the township government is one of the villages of the township.⁴ In Gushichan township, the village office (yakuba) is at Gushichan village, while in Ginoza township, the office is in Ginoza village.

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At the head of this government is a mayor (sonchō) elected for a four year term. There is no strenuous campaigning for the office. Friends may induce a well known man to run, then visit the villages, and ask the people to vote for him. A reputation for being kind, fair, and refined (otonashi) goes far in electing a man. Once in office he is extremely busy, and like the village headman, usually looks forward to the end of his term rather than to re-election. A new mayor appoints his own or reappoints the old staff. He chooses a vice-mayor (joyaku) with the approval of the village assembly (gikai).

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A township office generally has the following administrative sections: (1) a treasury and disbursing office (shūnyūkyaku), (2) a general affairs (shomu) sections. The head of this section is in charge of the family registers (koseki) and of the registry of seals. These two important functions require a little elaboration.

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⁴ The government actually described here is that of Gushichan township. It did not seem worthwhile to repeat essentially the same information for Ginoza and then to make minute comparisons and contrasts between them.

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592 The family register is a basic official document recording officially all the family data for each household. These have been compiled since the war. The old registers which gave the family history in great and accurate detail were destroyed as a consequence of the war or intentionally by the Japanese. The standard form for the register contains (1) the place of permanent domicile of the family head (honseki), (2) the place of present residence (genjusho), (3) the name of the previous head of the family (senkonushi), (4) the head of the family (koshu), his birthdate, and his relationship to the preceding head, (5) the name of the father and mother of the present head, (6) the name of the wife, her birthdate, whether she is a first or succeeding daughter, the names of her parents, (7) the date of the marriage, (8) names of each family member with birthdate and relationship to the head. All matters pertaining to the family are recorded in one place. The register contains information about births, deaths, marriages, and additions, deletions, or notations as to foreign residence. If a second son establishes a branch family, a line is drawn through his name on the register and a notation refers to a new sheet set up for his family. Deaths are shown by drawing a red line through the name.

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213 The registry of seals (inkanbo) is a list of the seals of everyone in the township. The individual stamps his seal in the registry himself. The registry shows the date on which the seal is registered, the present address, permanent address, and the name and birthdate of its owner. Seals (han) are used whenever a signature would be required here. When used they are pressed into an India ink paste and stamped on the document requiring the seal.

632 Following general affairs, there is (3) the tax collection (saisei) (4) school affairs (kōmu), (5) a section devoted to agriculture, industry, fishing, or other important occupations in the township (sangyo), (6) health and sanitation (seisei) concerned with community sanitation, health and vital statistics, and (7) a relief and welfare section (shakaijiryō) which administers relief to the indigent.

[423] The village office also issues to each landowner a certificate of ownership (shoyōkenshōmeisho) with the seal of the mayor for each parcel a villager owns. These sheets, a separate one for each parcel, are bound up in a small book.

[622] The mayor and his staff hear complaints from individual taxpayers regarding assessments, the amount of the tax, or the classification of land. The atmosphere of a township office is friendly and informal. Callers bow on entering. The mayor is readily accessible. (In my experience, mayors and headmen are very high types of individuals). Most members of the staff bring their own lunches. Each office has a young girl or boy to serve tea and to watch the fire.

The legislative functions of township government are performed by an assembly (gikai), whose members, elected at large, enact ordinances and approve the mayor's appointment of a vice mayor. The mayor, his administrative staff, and the township assembly administer the township.

Their acts are enforced in each of the villages by the headman.

The village headman (kuchō) is an intermediary between the people and the township government. He listens to complaints from his people, carries them to the township government for a hearing, and has supervision over official community projects and activities. The headman, like the mayor, is a busy, hardworking man. His pay, insufficient to live on, is midway between a salary and an honorarium. The headman of Hanashiro, for example, received ¥720 per month, Minatogawa ¥950, and Matsuda ¥2000 a month.⁵ The headman usually has a paid clerk (shoki) who works full time and may receive more pay than the headman. The clerk compiles reports of the village population, assists the headman at meetings, and is a general administrative assistant.

The village headman is elected for a period of one year. There is no campaigning. The election generally is preceded by discussions among the heads of households, village elders, the young men's association and the women's association. These discussions reveal the candidates who are able to do the work and have the leisure and the money to undertake the responsibility.

A village headman usually leads a harried life. Most of them regard their term as a duty to be discharged rather than a beginning of a career in office holding. A former village headman of Hanashiro said that, in addition to the formal meetings he attended at the township office, he had to visit the village office at least 15 times a month on some village problem, such as taxes, health and sanitation, or individual complaints. The village headman of Minatogawa had a constant succession of problems: reports on overdue fishermen, getting water pipe lines from the mountains to the water tank repaired, taking charge of typhoon damage repair, and trying to have small improvements made in the village. The headman is caught between the township officials who need tax money and the villagers who complain that they have so little money with which to pay them. In Matsuda, there was the same multiplication of problems involving taxes, need for extra school supplies or repairs, and road maintenance.

Village headmen belong to no special age group. In one township, they ranged in age from 30 to 52. Age is not a decisive factor in their selection, but reputation, literacy, and friendliness are. Though there is a change in administration each year, the incumbent headman stays on one month after the close of his term until the new one has become accustomed to his duties. In some villages, the clerk is elected at the same time as the village headman.

The village headman does not have, nor does he desire, complete responsibility for administering the village. Two groups are available for advice. The headman will not make decisions on important non-routine matters without consulting them. The first of these, the village council

⁵ For comparative purposes, the minimum wage for young Okinawan girls employed as maids for US personnel was about ¥100 (\$9.17) per month.

have traditional, though restricted, forms of village co-operation. This meshing in of activities, either among families or groups, when combined with individual leadership brings about a situation in the village which is comparable with the experiences in the family system.

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These individual and family relationships which are the real content of village administration are also felt, though in a diluted form, in the township government. The influence of inter-village marriage, of the school whose pupils come from several villages, and of the annual athletic meets make for informality and elastic government. Township officials generally are drawn from each of the villages which make up a township. These elements provide both in village and township life a feeling of participation and a sense of belonging, already so strongly developed within the family system.

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Taira: An Okinawan Village

Between 1875 and 1895, when the court life at the old capital of Shuri was broken up under Japanese influence, many families of noble origin moved into the country to become farmers, and the village grew in size. These people settled mainly outside the central village in areas where land was available. One family moved into Taira proper, forming the third "main house." Although it still maintains feeble ceremonial connections with Shuri, it gave up its noble title shortly after coming north and moved its ancestral tomb to the community. The noble families who settled in the valleys and hills preserved their distinctive traditions until the end of World War II. Their noble descent was noted in the population register, and intermarriage with commoners was discouraged.

Except for these Shuri migrants, few outsiders seem to have settled in Taira prior to World War II. The residents on the southern part of the island, especially the residents of Naha and Shuri, consider northerners rustics. Although this part of the island was often used as a hiding place by political and criminal refugees from the south, who are said to have founded nearby villages, none of them made their home in Taira.

The original settlers of Taira were reluctant to accept later arrivals in their midst. Because of the fear of spirits, foreign to the village, they prohibited the burial of the newcomer's dead near the tombs shared by the members of the "main houses." To this day the funeral urns of a family who came to Taira about 60 years ago and later intermarried with settled villages are kept in a cave, away from all other tombs.

Higashi township was established in 1922. The area had previously belonged to Kushi township to the south, but the great distances between villages and the mountainous character of the country made efficient administration very difficult. Furthermore, some Higashi inhabitants felt that because of temperamental differences and divergent interests they should separate from the southern township. Since 1922 contacts have been predominantly with Ogimi township to the north-west and the town of Nago, 16 miles away. Once the road connecting the two coastlines was completed in 1936, Taira's isolation decreased considerably, and it became the administrative seat of Higashi township in 1946.

Taira also became the home of the high priestess. In the period prior to direct Japanese administration, her office was under the jurisdiction of the Shuri court (Lebra, 1958), and her predecessors must have been appointed by the Okinawan kings. Taira may have been chosen as the seat of the high priestess in lieu of Kawata because Kawata lacks the good rice land which traditionally went to the high priestess by royal decree. Some of this rice land is still in the hands of the living priestess.



Chapter 5

Political Organization and Social Control

THE TOWNSHIP

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631 Administratively Taira village is part of Higashi township, an area of
[131] approximately 30 square miles with six independent villages spread
over a distance of about 15 miles along the coast. Taira is centrally
located and since 1946 has been the seat of the township administra-
tion. Higashi is one of several townships in northern Okinawa. It is
responsible to the central Ryukyuan government at Naha which has
branch offices at Nago, the nearest town to Taira. Control over com-
munities such as Taira by a central government is of ancient date.
The Okinawan king levied taxes throughout the island and held politi-
cal control over the villages until establishment of Japanese adminis-
tration.

632 The township office is headed by a mayor who is elected for four
years by popular vote. He nominates an assistant mayor who must be
confirmed by the township assembly, a council of 16 representatives
who are elected from all the villages. The Assembly meets two or three
times a year to enact local ordinances, to confirm the mayor's appoint-
ments, and to approve the annual budget.

632 The administrative organization of the township consists of five
647 departments, which are responsible for carrying out central government
policies. The Finance and Education Department is concerned with
tax collection and general school affairs. The Industrial Department
acts as controlling and advising agent in all matters of subsistence and
cash production. Financial help for farmers is channeled through this
department. Attached to it is an Agricultural Extension Division agent
[217] who is concerned with individual farmers' problems. A General Affairs
Department is in charge of office administration; it is also responsible

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for keeping the population registry, with vital statistics and relevant information on all township residents.* The Welfare Department investigates relief cases and receives applications for support from the poorest families. The Health and Sanitation Administration is primarily concerned with preventive work. Representatives from these five departments are supposed to visit all the villages in the township frequently to inspect and to discuss regulations. The officials and personnel of the five departments are drawn equally from all the villages and commute daily by foot, bicycle, or bus. 632 [217]

The township administration links the central government and individual villages. Numerous requests for central government aid, originating in each community, are sent through the township office. The government in turn deals with each community through the township administration. Contact between township and the villages is maintained by weekly meetings of all village headmen with the mayor and his staff. The village headman is responsible for carrying out township and central government ordinances. 631

THE VILLAGE

The village headman is elected once a year, in June, from a slate agreed on beforehand during informal discussions by villagers. There is no campaigning; in fact, the elections are treated more as a necessity than a politically important event, and neither before nor after do they incite much public discussion. This democratic process of elections is of post-World War II date. Before the war, the council of village leaders accepted a new headman only if the choice pleased them, so that the headman at that time was virtually appointed. Villagers remarked that "listening to public opinion is a recent change." 622 666 [177]

The village is still experimenting with the mechanics of a free election. Votes are still restricted to household heads, but the Taira Women's Association and Young People's Association tried to change this in 1955. Although they did not succeed, a concession was made by permitting "representatives" to vote for their household in the absence of a household head, provided the voter was 20 years of age. The elec- 666 [592] [575]

* The old registry was totally destroyed during the war. A new one is being prepared with the help of the people. It no longer differentiates between persons of noble and common descent. Information on crimes committed by people, sentences passed by courts, and other information, such as diseases in the family, like mental illness, is also omitted now.

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623 attend." As on all occasions women usually sit together on one side or in the rear. Few of them participate during discussions. The most active spokesmen for the women are the head of the Women's Association and one or two of her close assistants. If a discussion concerns such matters as liquor and food for celebrating certain holidays, a woman may speak up. Mothers bring their infants along and hold them in their arms or nurse them when they get restless. Sometimes a child feels uncomfortable and starts crying, and the mother is forced to leave the room.

[854]
554 In general, Taira people do not enjoy being leaders or playing a dominating role. There are no bosses who attempt to force issues or dictate policies. Even people who have definite ideas on how to effect changes would not attempt to assume full responsibility by disregarding the advice of others. "Power" is not associated with responsible positions and village leadership. The headman and clerk perform a duty, often loathed by them and never too highly rewarded by others. A man commands respect for his education, age, sound advice, and exemplary behavior, not for the office he holds. Moreover, all villagers are friendly neighbors, and the man who is presently headman still remains a relative or neighbor to everybody. There is more prestige associated with township offices. The mayor, who holds the highest position, is a man of age and experience; he commands a great deal of respect and has been elected to that office because of the high esteem in which he is held. Occasionally one hears of power hungry persons who are unscrupulous and authoritarian, but they are rare.

FORMAL CONTROL

625 Formal control of law and order is in the hands of the police. A detachment of the Hentona district police is located in the village, and one policeman is constantly stationed there. He lives with his family in a building which also has a small office. Recently a telephone with direct connections to Hentona was installed. The policeman and his wife are from another township.

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[166] The policeman's main duty, according to villagers, is to protect them from the occasional outside burglars or from fugitives from the south who come north to hide in the woods. The announcement that such a person is on the loose creates much excitement and anxiety. A second important duty is the control of the shore line. Smugglers and illegal entrants from the Japanese island of Yoron, just to the north of Okinawa, land along the coast. Although one man with only a bicycle can hardly control effectively several miles of coastline, since the only road to the outer world leads through Taira, the policeman

1 [i.e. - to the household head meeting -
ANALYST]

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can at least check all transients. Another important duty is to prevent the use of explosives by fishermen, a difficult if not impossible assignment, for he must catch the fisherman *flagrante delicto* when he lands with fish killed in this way. There is no indication that villagers assist the policeman in detecting offenders.

Policing the village itself is not a difficult job. The absence of crime and the low incidence of quarrels, disputes, and brawls would seem to make policing unnecessary. Nevertheless, the policeman interferes at times in disputes. He considers it his duty when actual blows are exchanged and somebody is hurt. In such a case he "investigates," takes notes, and makes a report to the police department. During the entire field work, reportable incidents occurred at about the rate of one a month; in the two or three cases where violence occurred, the matter was settled peacefully later, although the policeman kept a record of it. The rare quarrels which do occur are usually the result of drinking or domestic disagreements, generated by financial problems.

The policeman plays the role of judge and jury. In one case a young man hit a woman and was temporarily detained by the policeman until he made apologies to the victim. In disputes over business transactions, the policeman often arbitrates. In a dispute in which a Taira woman was accused of cheating a trader from another village, the policeman heard the case and ordered the Taira woman to make refunds over a period of time. The villagers seem to accept such arbitration. Serious disagreements seem to be unthinkable, and everyone fears public censure and ostracism. Court action is extremely rare and is referred to the provincial courts in the town of Nago.

The policeman is given high status by the villagers and commands respect. He remains, probably by his own choice, a neutral person in village affairs. He attends village functions, where he is given a place among village leaders. Being friendly with many families, he visits and is visited by other men. It was noted that fishermen sometimes send a special catch to the policeman. But since this is a courtesy which is also common among farmers with regard to nonfarming people, such as teachers, one should not think of such actions as bribery. Mothers use the policeman as a threat in disciplining children. "If you do such a bad thing again, I'll take you to the police station." This, however, does not seem to instill any fear of his person, but rather a respect towards the general area in which the policeman lives. Village children play freely with the policeman's children, but his courtyard is entered less frequently by children than that of other villagers.

The head of the General Affairs Department at the township office is charged with supervision of public order. It is not clear how much this is a self-assigned task. During several occasions, when an alarm

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[632] went out for fugitives from the south, he would accompany the police-
[647] man or investigate himself. In cases of death, both he and the police-
[575] man have to make a report.
[731]

The Young People's Association may serve as a vigilante in emer-
gencies such as fires, floods, tornadoes, and other disasters. When a
military jeep was reported to have been stolen near Naha and driven
on the dead-end road running north, the young people in all villages
on the way erected road blocks and were ready to help catch the thief.
The group would act together in a similar fashion at any threat from
outsiders.

622 The headman can only enforce local ordinances insofar as he is
681 able to persuade people to comply. He is not concerned directly with
[625] crime or disturbance of the peace. Exceptions are such matters as steal-
ing sugar cane or letting chickens run loose so that they enter every
yard. For such acts, money fines can be imposed. One warden still has
a tag which used to be given to the man whose chickens ran around
freely. The offender had to pay the fine and keep the tag until he de-
tected someone else's chicken running loose. Then he could pass the
tag on to that person. Such measures are no longer used. But the un-
[626] derlying principle of public censure and fear of ridicule continues to
operate in village social control.

623 Public censure is used along with fines to ensure attendance at vil-
626 lage meetings. Roll call is taken before each meeting so that the ab-
[681] sence of individuals is made known to the whole group. Similarly, when
tax collections became more and more delinquent, it was decided to
have ward meetings in which everybody would be reminded in public
to pay his share. Those who were unable to do so would have to state
their reasons. As soon as this new plan was announced, several people
got up during the meeting to pay outstanding amounts to the head-
872 man. The school uses similar devices to achieve better attendance and
scholarship. During home visit week, about once a year, a meeting is
held for all parents and the statistics for attendance for each village
are read as well as scholastic performances for each community.

INFORMAL CONTROL

156
626 What other people might think is uppermost on everybody's mind.
[867] Children are reminded by their mothers not to play alone lest people
would think they are unpopular. They are told not to fight lest others
think badly of them or make them responsible for the consequences.
Censure by gossip is common, but criticism is seldom made directly to
a person's face, and the target of extensive gossip is often unaware of it.

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the school. Classes are held from 9 o'clock until noon with one recess. After an hour for lunch, lessons resume for all grades above first. Classes, sports, and cleanup end between 2 and 3:30 in the afternoon, the highest grades staying the longest. 872

All grades receive instruction in Japanese writing and reading, arithmetic, science, music, and drawing. Social science is introduced in the second grade. Since each class has one teacher for all subjects, shifts from one to the next subject may come in the middle of an hour. The greatest amount of time is spent in teaching Japanese reading and writing. At first grade level the simplified syllabary is taught, followed in the second grade by another syllabary and the first Chinese characters. [871] [177] [191]

Parents maintain contact with the school through a Parent-Teachers Association, called by the American abbreviation, PTA. Every household is a member. Those with children of school age are regular members who pay 15 yen (12 cents) a month; others are supposed to pay 5 yen but have become so delinquent that their fees have been dropped. The actual PTA work is done by a committee from each village, including the headman and the heads of the Women's and Young People's Associations. The main purpose of the PTA is to support the school in some of its maintenance problems. Attendance of all parents at a general meeting occurs only once a year when elections of officers take place and the PTA budget is discussed and approved. 875 575

The principals of both schools are represented in township affairs and in the associations of their own community. Contact between village leaders and school representatives is therefore frequent. Since education taxes are the single largest tax item which villagers pay (80% of the total tax), this representation of the principals is a necessary but burdensome duty for them. 875 621 [651]

Township education taxes are supplemented by government subsidies. School taxes are paid by all households according to their income and average about 515 yen (\$4.30) yearly. Since 1952, government orders require education taxes to be levied separately from other taxes so that people are aware of the amount destined for education; tax collection is one of the main problems in village administration, and school principals are sometimes called on to explain the need for such taxation and the obligations of individuals to carry their share of the burden. 871 658 651

The administration of funds and general school matters are the responsibility of an official in the township finance department. During 1954-1955, 310,344 yen (\$2586) were collected by the township in education taxes. The government subsidy amounted to 3,716,397 yen [632] ●

Loans Almost no rural person deals as an individual with a bank for small amounts, as he is embarrassed to deal with strangers and has a tradition of distrust of city people in general. The small 'moai' is the mark of a rather stable agricultural community. Between the 'moai' and the city bank operates the individual loan shark, catering to people who need money desperately---either because of ill health or family troubles---or because with a little capital the borrower hopes to "make a killing" in some enterprise. These needy people are quite willing to contract to repay at the exorbitant interest rate of ten per cent per month. As might be expected, many persons default on repayment of these loans, to the intense and very vocal indignation of the lender. 452

Almost every 'son' has a credit cooperative, or 'Shin'yō Kyōdo Kamiai'. These are operated by the 'son' office, and when the money involved filters down to individuals the amount concerned is much less than one can obtain through a 'moai'. Amounts available for loan generally range from ¥10,000 to ¥15,000 for each village. Then the amount is divided according to the number of households in the 'han', or ward, of the village. Bigger 'han' can borrow about ¥3,000 while smaller ones may borrow ¥2,000. The money is borrowed by the 'han' and then sub-borrowed by individuals or by groups of two or three men. A person may but seldom does borrow directly from the 'son' office as an individual. However, repayment is always made on an individual basis, rather than through the 'han' and village. The village headman, or 'kucho', is the person responsible ('sekinin-sha') for the operation of the fund in his bailiwick. [632]

One Nanahan man has moved temporarily to Itoman. He obtained a GARIOA-subsidized bank loan for ¥360,000 (\$3,000) to buy a truck. His success in finding customers in the Maha part area assures that the loan will not be defaulted. 453

'Son' Relief At the end of 1952 there were 335 persons, representing 114 households, who were receiving relief from the 'son' office. 746 [632]

Details are presented below:

Class of Aid	From Prewar		Due to War		Postwar		Total	
	Houses	Persons	Houses	Persons	Houses	Persons	Houses	Persons
Orphans	--	--	8	15	--	--	8	15
Aged persons	23	28	14	29	4	5	41	62
Widows	--	--	15	76	12	60	27	136
Sick persons	3	10	5	12	7	26	15	48
Disabled	8	13	3	7	1	5	12	25
Other	1	4	4	18	6	27	11	49
TOTAL	35	55	49	157	30	123	114	335

To obtain relief, old people must fulfill the usual requirements of living alone, being propertyless, ill, and without familial support. In the

746 one case investigated, the village secretary and most of the village people thought that a certain old repatriate should be on relief, if only to receive money to obtain the tobacco he could not buy. The 'son' office was not told about his elder brother's second son, who lives in Osaka. Nor was any check made on the untrue report that he was ill, for no medical proof or witnesses are needed. Upon moving from his sister-in-law's house to a grass shack next door, he was placed upon the relief list to receive the monthly maximum of ¥250 (about \$2.08).

746 The 'son' office also supervises the distribution to persons on relief of clothes supplied by the American relief agency RIVAC (Ryukyu Islands Voluntary Agencies Committee). Each person receives free two or three useful items upon signing for their receipt with his chop. These are greatly appreciated by the recipients.

621 Rentals of Village-Owned Land Each village generally owns some grassland, 417 some forest land, and a pond or two. These they rent out to the highest bidder. The 'genya' or grassland is rented anew each year, and the person may keep it in grass, or may convert it to dry crop land ('hatake'). The only requirement is that he must not let the grass grow long and shade the nearby crops. The plot owned by Tomoyose village used to be the village horse-powered sugar mill before the better one was built before the war.

Ponds owned by the village are rented out to the highest bidder in a [228] secret bid, for a period of two years. The renter uses the pond to raise [423] carp. Forest land, I was told, is not supposed to be owned by the village, so it is recorded in the land register as the property of a prominent private individual.

651 Taxes The Okinawan farmer is subject to a great number of official taxes. • [632] The following is a list of the fifteen 'sonzei', or township taxes, of Kanagusuku-son. Legally these are called district taxes, or 'chihō-zei'.

<u>Tax Name</u>	<u>Translation</u>
Sonmin-zei	Township Citizens' Tax (on all persons who are able to work, except students)
Tochi-zei	Land Tax
Fudōsan Shutoku ze	Real Estate Acquisition Tax
Kaoku-zei	House (or Building) Tax
Kōgyō-zei	Tax for Industry (eg: 'sake' factory)
Gyubasha-zei	Tax for Horsecart or Oxcart
Jidōsha-zei	Auto, Bus and Jitney Tax (Motor Vehicle Tax)
Rajio-zei	Radio Tax
Denchū-zei	Electric Pole Tax
Tochiku-zei	Slaughter Tax
Chikken-zei	Dog Tax
Sempaku-zei	Boat Tax
Jitensha-zei	Bicycle Tax
Denwa-zei	Telephone Tax
Jigyō-zei	Business Tax

In addition to the above, a 'kenkyū-hi' (study charge) is collected to supplement the pay of the school teachers. The most important of the above taxes are the 'sonmin-zei', the 'tochi-zei', and the 'kaoku-zei'. In Kochinda-son there was instituted for the first time in 1953 an Education Tax, or 'kyōiku-zei'. In most cases this amount was about 10% larger than the 'sonmin-zei' amount. All Nanahan taxes have constantly risen during the years 1951, 1952 and 1953. In part this may reflect the rising value of the land, especially that converted into paddies. But it is also in part a reflection of the rising cost of government. The average of all taxes per household in Kochinda-son for 1952 was ¥486; the tax amount per individual was ¥104.¹

Payments to Officials From the taxes paid by the 'son' citizens come the salaries of the village mayors and the salaries of those employed at the 'son' office. In addition, the 'son' pays for the transportation costs of township assemblymen ('son-giin') so that they may attend meetings held at the village office. The following is a list of the functions of persons working at the Kochinda-son office in 1954:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Translation</u>
Sonchō	Township Mayor
Joyaku	Assistant Mayor
Shūnyū-yaku	Treasurer
Keizai-shunin	Head of the Economic Department
Keizaika-in (2)	Member of the Economic Department (2 persons)
Sōmuka-shunin	Head of the General Affairs Dept.
Sōmuka-in	Member of General Affairs Dept. (doubles as Secretary to the Mayor)
Tōkei-shokuin	Statistics Clerk
Koseki-chōsain	Census Registry Inquiry Clerk
Koseki-seibi-in (2)	Census Registry Arrangement Clerks (2)
Tochi-gakari	Persons in Charge of Land Affairs
Zaimuka-shunin	Head of the Financial Department
Zaimuka-in	Member of the Financial Department
Engojimu-in	Person in Charge of Relief and Aid
Shakai-jigyō-in	Person in Charge of Social Affairs
Shakai-fukushi-shi	Public Welfare Officer
Kōmuka-in	Person in Charge of Industrial Dept.
Nōgyō-kairyō-fukyū-in	Person in Charge of Agricultural Improvement and Diffusion
Shitei	Servant

On the village level there are other taxes that never enter into the official tax figures. Each 'hanchō', or ward head, collects in Tomoyose monthly about 10% of the year's estimated 'sonmin-zei'. This, however, is not that tax, but is used for the expenses of the village. Much of it goes to pay the expenses of the village clerk.

Levies In addition to the levy mentioned above, designed to supplement the low salaries of school teachers, there are irregular levies made for special occasions. One very informal levy observed during my stay was a collection of money for the reversion movement. Others include levies upon

¹ Ryūkyū tōkei hōkoku, op. cit., p. 84.

Others include levies upon

651 organizations and families to support the athletic meets, or 'undōkwaï',
[526] which are such a popular part of life in Okinawa.

575 Before the war the women's group ('fujinkai') and the young people's
178 group ('seinendan') levied a certain amount of soybeans against each member,
and when they were delivered the sale brought in money to finance their ac-
tivities. These organizations also made up special meals for local athletic
[524] favorites while they were in training, and provided a feast for them at the
526 end of the contests. Today the 'undōkwaï' is on more of a monetary basis,
651 and there is a levy called the 'undōkwaï no keihi'. In October of 1953, the
• 632 cost of the grand athletic meeting held in Naha was divided among the 'son'
according to the number of champions sent to the contest. Kochinda-son was
top grade in Shimajiri, and Tomoyose was a middle-grade village within
Kochinda-son. This grade was judged by the amount of arable land, its yield,
and the population. Within the village, households in turn are assessed by
three grades, according to their income tax records. These three grades
were "minimum," under ¥20; "middle", ¥20-50; and "maximum", ¥50-54.

621 Local Philanthropy From time to time the leading household heads are called
741 upon to donate money for improvement of village facilities. Names of contributors and amounts given are written upon a wooden
plaque and hung in the village meeting house. The building of this meeting
house itself involved the gathering of such a fund, to which Nanahan people
gave a total of ¥1,450. Later a request for funds to buy a funeral stretcher
brought ¥350 from the household heads, and a road repair campaign netted
¥1,550 from Nanahan.

Somewhat the reverse of the above occurred after the Russo-Japanese
war when a particularly handsome soldier from the neighboring village came
back from the front. All the leading 'geisha' in Naha had long had the habit
of asking him to come to their establishments without charge. His return
brought such joy to their hearts that they got together a sum of money and
bought him a large plot of land near Nanahan.

52 Prizes at Contests From the time a youngster enters school and participates
in his first contest to the time when he shows an animal
at his last village or 'son' festival before retiring, all winners look for-
ward to some sort of prize to mark the occasion. In school the prizes are
generally beautifully handwritten scrolls, but as one gets older the prizes
assume the form of wooden trays and articles of practical use in the home.

858 Sale of Children When the SIRI team first arrived on Okinawa and mentioned
432 that we were interested in finding if the Okinawans still
[83] practiced the sale of children, sophisticated respondents feigned indignation.
Later on, as we were able to gain rapport in the countryside, a number of such
instances were forthcoming.

In Tomoyose a man got into debt over an effort to make a fortune in
sugar along about 1910. He was so heavily in debt to village people that he
was socially unable to live in the community, and moved to Itoman. There he
sold his son to a fisherman. The son is now a grown man with an Okinawan wife
and a mistress from Amami. His business is still fishing, although he also
owns a truck.

CHAPTER VI: POLITICAL ORGANIZATION AND CONTROL

W. P. Lebra

1. Territorial Organization

631 The territory of the Ryukyuan government is subdivided into a number of municipalities whose administrations are directly responsible to the central government in Naha. There are three types of municipalities---city ('shi'), town ('chō'), and township ('son')---depending on their population and character. The 'shi' (city) and 'chō' (town) are urban municipalities whereas the 'son' (township) is always rural. Each of these are in turn subdivided into 'ku' which are equivalent to wards in the urban municipalities and to villages or hamlets in the rural. This study shall concern itself exclusively with the governments of the 'son' and 'ku'. As of May 1954 there were four cities, four towns, and forty-eight townships on Okinawa and its peripheral islands, and these contained over five hundred villages and settlements.

632 The governmental designations in use on Okinawa are the same as those employed in Japan though there are several minor distinctions. A 'son' or township in Japan and Okinawa is a collective grouping of a number of separate communities or villages into a single administrative unit. In Japan the 'son' is a fairly recent creation, dating back to the late nineteenth century; in most cases it is a rather arbitrary grouping of villages in the interests of administrative expediency. It is exclusively a governmental unit, rarely a social or historical entity. This, however, is not the case on Okinawa.

175 Prior to Japanese annexation the present 'son' on Okinawa were called majiri;
632 in the Okinawan feudal age (aji nu yuu---Age of the Aji or Manor Lords) these were the hereditary fiefs of the local lords. Later, after the end of feudalism in the fifteenth century they became the administrative districts of the Shuri government. Each district was headed by an official (jiturei) appointed by the king, and the majiri or district was most important as the land-disbursing unit in a system of communal land ownership. It also served as the basic tax unit, since taxes were levied against the majiri by the Shuri government rather than against the individual family or village. Each majiri, like the present-day 'son', consisted of a number of small villages called mura, the equivalent of the present-day 'aza' or 'ku'. After Japan formally annexed the Ryukyus in 1879, the old administrative system was not immediately abolished and continued to exist for some time. The system of communal land tenure and taxation lasted until 1903, and the majiri were not converted into their present-day counterpart, the 'son', until 1907. In most cases the old majiri name was given to the new 'son', which generally corresponded to the territory of the former although a few of the larger ones have since been subdivided. For example, Motobu was divided into Motobu and Kami Motobu. In most cases, however, there has been a continuity in political districts since the feudal period.

621 Each 'son' is made up of a number of villages which are called 'aza' or 'ku' by official designation. For all practical purposes the two terms

642 highly structured system; the overall impression is of rule by bureaucracy. Most importantly the average individual accepts all of this as in the natural ordering of things. The best possible relationship of the state to the people is thought to be a paternalistic one, like father to children. Such an attitude is wholly in keeping with a culture which has traditionally stressed family and community over individual, and obligations over rights.

632 'Son' Government The administrative center of every 'son' is the township office ('sonyakuba') which serves as the connecting link between the people of its villages and the central government in Naha. The main functions of this office are to transmit and implement the directives and laws of the central government to the people, to collect taxes, and to keep records---the most important of these being the household registry ('koseki') and land records ('tochi daichō'). The size of the office staff is largely determined by the township size; in the larger townships there are many departments and employees, but in a small 'son' several departments may be grouped under a single head.

632 The building housing this office is usually a single-storied structure
344 located in the largest village of the township; a post office, school, agri-
[345] cultural office, and store are often nearby. The interior of the office building is one large room sometimes sub-divided into smaller offices by the use of screens; one end of the room is set aside for meetings. On the exterior of the building along one side the names of the various departments are above the windows. When a villager calls at the office on business, he ordinarily does not enter the building but stands outside the window appropriate to his business until a clerk or official of that department opens it and speaks to him.

632 At the head of the township government is the 'sonchō' ('son' mayor),
554 who in addition to directing its affairs functions as the liaison between the 'son' and the central government. It was the author's impression after spending considerable time in one 'son' office and visiting several others that the 'sonchō' is usually a very busy man and that he is more often away from his office than in it. In addition to directing the activities of his office, he makes numerous inspections within the township, attends meetings and conferences in other parts of the island, and once a month participates in a council of all the mayors of the municipalities, which is held in Naha. The latter enables the mayors of the municipalities to discuss common problems and to come in contact with the officials of the central government. Three times each month he meets with the mayors ('kuchō') of the villages within his township for a discussion of local problems. It is said that the office can be a stepping stone for the politically ambitious since his activities bring a wide range of contacts; this cannot be said for any other office in the 'son' or 'ku'. During the course of his research on Okinawa the author met the mayors of five or six municipalities, and in all cases he was impressed by the intelligence and ability of these men. A mayor is elected for a term of four years and is eligible for reelection.

632 The chief lieutenants of the 'sonchō' are the assistant mayor ('joyaku') and the revenue officer or treasurer ('shūnyūyaku'); the latter usually directs all financial matters, and his major function is tax collection and

maintaining tax records. The major departments within the 'son' office are 632
General Affairs, Economic and Financial, School Affairs, Agriculture and In-
dustry, Public Welfare and Social Affairs, and Land Affairs. The organiza-
tion of the staff and the composition of the various departments are not con-
sistent from 'son' to 'son', much depending on the size of the township, but
in all cases the same functions are performed. The office staff also includes
a chief accountant or statistician and a servant-janitor. The entire staff is
appointed by the mayor with the approval of the 'son' assembly. Once a per-
son secures such a job, he is rarely discharged except for gross incompetence
or misbehavior; consequently, there is a very slow turnover of office personnel
except among the young girls employed as clerks.

Next in importance only to the functions of the treasurer is the Gen- 632
eral Affairs Department ('shomuka'), which is responsible for the keeping of 217
census data and the household registry ('koseki'). The latter is a record of
particular importance to all citizens. A 'koseki' is a registry of the house-
holds (families) within the 'ku'; thus, in Kanegusuku-son there are eight
'koseki' for the eight villages within the township. Every individual is re-
garded as a member of a family, and every family has a place of permanent
residence where its 'koseki' is kept with the others of the community. The
'koseki' for a family lists all members of the family or household beginning
with the former household head ('koshu'), followed by the household head.
Each member is listed according to his relationship to the head of the house,
and also included for each person are birth order, parentage, birth date,
marriage, divorce, place of residence (temporary and permanent). When a per-
son dies, leaves the family or community permanently, marries (in the case of
women only), or sets up an independent house of his own (males only), his or
her name is crossed out in the 'koseki' of that family. When a woman marries,
her name is crossed out in her father's and is entered in that of her husband
or his family. When a younger son marries and sets up an independent house,
his name is also removed from his father's household, and a new household
record is begun with himself as head. The names of those who have died or
have permanently left the community are entered in a record called 'joseki'
(literally---removed from registry) which is a listing of all those names
which have been removed from the household registries. Persons who wish to
have a copy of their birth record and family affiliation secure a certificate
called 'koseki shōhon' ('koseki' copy) which is an abbreviated 'koseki' list-
ing the individual concerned and the household head. Everyone is theoretically
listed in a 'koseki' somewhere, and without this one cannot secure government
employment, enter school, or leave the country. Nevertheless, in every munic-
ipality and particularly in the urban ones there are a number of persons who
live illegally unregistered; these persons are called 'musekisha' (persons
without registered domicile), and they are said to be a source of concern to
officials and police. In Kanegusuku-son there are three such individuals
(known to 'son' officials) who are the offspring of American servicemen and
Okinawan mothers. The mothers are said to be too embarrassed to come in and
register the children, and the officials are hesitant to press the matter lest
the mothers suffer any more anguish; however, unless the children are regis-
tered, they will be unable to attend school. In addition to these records the
General Affairs Department also maintains an important registry of seal ('han')
impressions which serve as the equivalent of legal signatures in American life.

- 632 The Land Affairs Department maintains the land ownership records
423 ('tochi daichō') and issues certificates of land title ('chiken'). The head
[651] of this department ('tochijimuchō' or 'tochi gakari') together with the village mayor ('kuchō') and his council assesses land values for tax purposes.
- 632 The Departments of Public Welfare and Social Affairs are concerned
744 with matters relating to relief, health, sanitation, etc. The functions of these overlap somewhat with those of the police and the Naha Health Center. One day each month a nurse from the Health Center is at the township office giving shots to children. Once a month there is a sanitation inspection of all the villages within the 'son'; the emphasis shifts each month---thus, one month it may be for mosquito control and the next it may be extermination of flies. Relief measures are also handled from these departments.
- 632 A 'son' assembly ('senkai' or 'songikai') functions as the legislative
178 branch of 'son' government; it is empowered to enact local ordinances, approve the mayor's selection of employees for the village office, and make local tax levies. In Kanegusuku-son each of the eight villages selects two representatives ('sonkaigiin') for the assembly, and the term of office is four years. Before the end of the war this body was an appointive one selected by the mayors of the villages ('kuchō'); in turn the assembly appointed the township mayor. The bulk of the population had no voice in local government; today, however, both the mayor and the assembly stand for election. In all elections
[664] for municipal and central government offices universal suffrage now obtains; all those twenty and above are entitled to vote.
- 632 The meetings of the 'son' assembly are too infrequent to provide effective
622 representation at all times for the people. Regular contact between the people and the township office is maintained by frequent meetings of all the village mayors ('kuchō') with the township mayor ('sonchō'). This group, known as 'kuchokai' (village mayors' assembly), meets three times each month generally on the fifth, fifteenth, and twenty-fifth, though in times of emergency or pressing business it may meet oftener. Problems of general concern to the villages are discussed. These meetings enable the township mayor to keep in touch with the problems of the villages and what the people are thinking; they also provide the opportunity to inform and instruct the village mayors regarding directives or projects to be carried out in the villages.
- 632 One of the chief functions of the township government is to collect
651 taxes for the central government and for its own needs. The following township taxes ('senzei', or in legal terminology, 'chihōzei') are those levied by Kanegusuku-son:
- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| senmin-zei | Villagers' Tax. This is a head tax on all persons who are able to work between the ages of 17 and 60 excluding students, blind, sick, and crippled persons. |
| tochi-zei | Land Tax. For details see chapter on Land Tenure. |
| fudōsan shutoku-zei | Real Estate Acquisition Tax. |
| kaoku-zei | House or Building Tax. |

kōgyō-zei	Industry Tax.
gyūbasha-zei	Horsecart or Oxcart Tax.
jidōsha-zei	Automotive Vehicle Tax (all types).
rajio-zei	Radio Tax.
denchū-zei	Electric Pole Tax.
tochiku-zei	Slaughter Tax.
chikken-zei	Dog Tax.
senpaku-zei	Boat Tax.
jitensha-zei	Bicycle Tax.
denna-zei	Telephone Tax.
jigyō-zei	Business Tax
kenkyū-hi	Study Fee. This is assessed on the basis of land holding, and it is used to provide a yearly bonus, 50% of one month's salary, to all the school teachers of Kanegusuku-son. The 'son' feels that the salaries paid by the central government are too low and uses this tax as a means of supplementing them.

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The following work schedule was copied from the blackboard in the town-ship offices of Kanegusuku-son in May, 1954. All of the listed activities are those which must be handled in addition to the regular work load. Virtually all of the scheduled meetings required the presence of the mayor (sonchō); a number of those were held outside of his district (son). At the present time American work schedules are followed. Saturday afternoon and Sunday are regarded as holidays for the office staff, though oftentimes the mayor and department heads may work on those days if there is pressing business.

[527]

Schedule of Activities for Kanegusuku-son Office
for May 1954

- May
- 1st -
 - 2nd - Sunday
 - 3rd - Industrial Conference at Ryukyu-American Cultural Center, Naha.
 - 4th - Welfare Week, May 4th through 10th.
 - 5th - 'Kochōkai'. Meeting of all village mayors at 2 p.m.
 - 6th -
 - 7th -
 - 8th -
 - 9th - Sunday
 - 10th - Meeting of all mayors of municipalities at Okinawa Kaikan, Naha, 10 a.m. Proclamation of law for welfare of children at Sekai Theater, Naha, 2 p.m.
 - 11th -
 - 12th - Injections for pigs for prevention of infectious diseases.
 - 13th - Meeting of Assembly Chairmen's Association of Southern Okinawa at Agricultural Cooperative Club.
Injections for pigs.
 - 14th - Industrial inspection of Southern Okinawa.
Injections for pigs.

● 632

- 15th - Industrial Inspection of Southern Okinawa.
- 16th - Sunday.
- 17th - Extermination of all noxious insects.
- 18th - 'Kuchōkai'. Meeting of all village mayors at 2 p.m.
- 19th -
- 20th - Inspection of fields.
Study for preparation of new 'koseki' at Shuri City Office, 10 p.m.
Meeting of chiefs of all Public Welfare Departments at Okinawa Kaikan, Naha.
- 21st - Training class for office workers of municipalities. The following must attend: Assistant Mayor, Chief of General Affairs Department, Treasurer, Chief Accountant, and Election Secretary.
Meeting of chiefs of all Public Welfare Departments, Naha.
- 22nd - Meeting of chiefs of all Public Welfare Departments, Naha.
- 23rd - Sunday. Farewell and welcome party for new and old mayors of the municipalities at Restaurant Hanasaki, Naha, 5 p.m.
- 24th - Dispensary. Shots for children.
- 25th - 'Kuchōkai'. Meeting of all village mayors at 2 p.m.
- 26th -
- 27th -
- 28th -
- 29th -
- 30th - Sunday
- 31st -

622 Village ('ku') Government Political Organization A 'kuchō' (mayor of 'ku') presides over the adminis-

tration of the village and functions as an intermediary between the villagers and the township office. In the latter capacity he carries the problems, questions, and complaints of the people to the township office ('senyakuba'); he also brings to the village directives and projects requested by that office and supervises their execution. In Kanegusuku-ku a 'kuchō' is elected for a term of one year and is not eligible for reelection; in order to be eligible for the office he must be over 27 years of age and a household head. He receives a monthly salary of ¥1100 (\$9.17) which is paid by the township, not the village. The office exacts heavy demands on the individual's time; consequently the position is accepted with a sense of responsibility or obligation, as a duty to be performed, rather than for any prestige or other benefits which might accrue. A 'kuchō' must make frequent trips to the township office, at least several a week; in addition three times each month he attends meetings of all the village mayors in his township. Emergencies in the village always demand his time. For example, when a death occurred in the village, he walked to the township office and notified the officials there, next notified the 'son' policeman, and then he walked to another village to secure a funeral palanquin; lastly he returned to his village and participated in the funeral ceremonies. His home is usually open at all times to villagers who seek information or wish to discuss a problem. Often he is asked to attend to a minor matter at the township office in their behalf; frequently these are matters of a sort which might as easily be handled by the individual concerned.

One of his major responsibilities to the township office is tax collection within the village; yet, his actual powers are slight, as nearly all of his official acts are first sanctioned by the villagers or the township office. It seemed to the author that the chief role of the 'kuchō' was as an intermediary between the people and the township office or as an agent for the latter, rather than as an administrator. It would seem that the payment of his salary by the township instead of by the village is symbolic of his actual role. 622 [65] [632]

Assisting the 'kuchō' are several officers the first of which is the assistant mayor ('fuku-kuchō') who is elected at the same time as the mayor and serves for one year. He is paid ¥480 (\$4.00) per month, and like the mayor he must be over 27 and a household head. In the absence of the mayor he functions in his place, and on all other occasions he assists him in his work. A village clerk ('shōki') is also elected at the same time as the 'kuchō', and serves for a term of one year; he is paid a salary of ¥700 (\$5.83) each month. The main qualifications for this position are that one have a fair amount of education and a good mastery of characters for writing. The job holds little appeal since it demands much of the individual's time and affords little in the way of prestige or pay. In Kanegusuku-ku in December of 1953 three elections were held in an effort to fill this position before someone finally and quite reluctantly accepted it. 624 [465] [465]

An advisory body of four councillors ('hyōgiin') assists the mayor in his administration; they represent each of the four neighborhoods or districts of the village. They are elected at the same time as the mayor, serve for one year, and receive a salary of ¥20 (17¢) per meeting. According to the villagers this body has replaced the earlier yūushi which was an unelected advisory council made up of former village officials, the village equivalent of elder statesmen. The 'kuchō' never undertakes an independent course of action; he first consults the 'hyōgiin' and obtains their approval and suggestions before initiating action. 623 [465]

Each village of Kanegusuku-son elects two men to represent it in the township ('son') assembly ('sonkai'); they are elected for a term of four years. Older, mature men who have held several official positions are always selected. They also play a part in village administration and are considered village officials. At all meetings they sit with the officials, and their opinion is much valued. 624 632

All matters of real importance are submitted to the household heads who form the real body politic within the village. The electorate for the village consists exclusively of household heads; to vote in a village election one must be a household head or one appointed by him to vote in his place, but in township and national elections universal suffrage obtains. At one village election which the author witnessed in December of 1953 balloting began as soon as the meeting was called to order without any preliminary speeches or nominations. It was later stated that the election and likely candidates had been informally discussed among the village leaders and household heads so that there was no need for preliminaries. The same situation seemed to prevail when meetings were held to discuss matters of general concern; the apparent unanimity of opinion and agreement indicated that informal concordance had been reached well in advance of formal discussion and decision. 621 592 666

All village officials (excluding 'kumichō') held more land than the average, but the size of their holdings was not so great as to indicate that this was a very significant factor. It was stated that a leader must have sufficient experience and education to enable him to handle the necessary records and to make a good appearance at the village office. Most frequently, however, "good character" was cited as a most necessary prerequisite for an official; this was usually equated with "honest person" and "hard worker". Though the villagers stated that the age range of officials might lie between 28 and 55, the present village leaders are men in their forties. The man considered by a number of villagers to be their most able and influential political leader is forty-seven years old. In contrast the four 'kumichō' are young men ranging in age from 18 to 23, and only one of these is a household head.

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Above the village level in the 'son' (township) government one encounters the professional administrator or bureaucrat---mayor, assistant, treasurer, and department heads. These men, in sharp contrast to the village officials, have an educational background including at least high school and more usually some college, normal school, or other type of advanced training. One gets the impression that they are strongly aware of their personal superiority; their attitude toward the governed is somewhat condescending and at best rather paternalistic. It is doubtful that they regard themselves as public servants although those whom the author encountered appeared to be conscientiously dedicated to their jobs. Of these officials only the mayor is elected; the others are appointed by him with the approval of the township assembly.

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Most people are respectful toward their village officials, recognizing them to be among the ablest men in the community, but they most certainly are not in awe of them. Except for the two representatives to the 'son' assembly, new officials are elected every year, and it is very rare for a man to hold the same office for two consecutive years. No one person remains in a given office long enough to become identified with it or to achieve a special status.

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The officials of the township office are usually professional government workers who have held their positions for a number of years. The villagers look up to them as administrators and superior persons; the mere fact that one has an official position confers a superior status. Some people expressed the belief that officials are good since only persons of education and good character could possibly attain such positions, and nearly all are of the opinion that officials enjoy an easy life and high pay.

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Most rural villagers seem pessimistic about their relationship to the government; they are not mistrustful but rather they expect little. They strongly feel that the government is something from afar and wholly out of touch with their problems. This attitude may carry over from the old kingdom when an urban upper class administered a rural peasantry; the subsequent Japanese administration during its early years consisted of little more than the replacement of one ruling class with another. Nonetheless the government is looked to for aid and direction since it is

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162 this may be the result of the war; the southern islands escaped heavy damage and loss of life. The urban area of Naha-Mawashi has a well-balanced sex ratio, and is probably a reflection of the number of men who directly or indirectly are connected with military employment.

The total number of persons per household has not appreciably changed in the fifteen years from 1937 to 1952:

Table Ia

Political Unit	Persons per Household, 1937	Persons per HH, 1952
Okinawa-ken	4.67	4.70
Naha	4.21	4.41
Shuri	4.18	4.17

The loss of men in the war was compensated for by those men who returned from Japan and those who repatriated from the Mandated Islands.

2. Population Characteristics of a Rural 'Son'

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16 Kochinda-son lies almost in the center of the southern section of Shimajiri. It does not border anywhere on the sea, and is entirely rural in that it has no industries of urban character. It is realized that no one area will be entirely typical of the whole of Okinawa; however, the population dynamics of this 'son' will undoubtedly be reflected in kind, if not in degree, by that of other farming areas. Fishing towns such as Itoman, Benza, Yakena and Yonabaru each probably have special types of adjustments that are not true of Kochinda.

[127] This researcher was permitted to copy the entire 'koseki' (population register) of Kochinda-son. In addition explanatory information was given by the 'son' office personnel when requested. In many cases it was possible to follow up and interview persons cognizant of the details of certain situations.

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[177] Okinawa still follows the prewar Japanese system of inheritance by first sons. Under normal conditions in the countryside, the first sons would inherit the bulk of the farm plots, and second sons would inherit a few plots and set up separate households. Or the second and following sons might go to Naha, Osaka or the south seas to seek employment. The war disrupted this pattern, and it is germane to examine the types and numbers of household heads, as one index of postwar change.

Because the solution of the population problem is a factor in Civil Administration planning for Okinawa, it is of importance to know the fertility ratio and the amount of spacing between births. The Okinavans, like the Japanese, tend to register a marriage after the birth of the first child. This should be quantified if possible. In addition, age at marriage should be known, since it bears a direct relationship to population increase. The number of illegitimate and common law children in the villages indicates

CHAPTER VIII LAND TENURE

W. P. Lebra

423 During the lifetime of the oldest living generation of Okinawans
 178 there have been operative two radically differing systems of land tenure---
 at first a system of communal land ownership and later a system of private
 ownership of land by families. At the present time a third system may be
 said to be emerging---private ownership by individuals. Changes in the
 systems of land tenure have been accompanied by significant changes in the
 family, economy, and community. During the wartime and post-war periods
 extensive land losses to military installations have severely disrupted the
 livelihood of a number of communities, thus furthering the process of
 change.

175 1. The Okinawan Kingdom and the Land Allotment System ('jivari seido')

[642] Prior to 1879 when Japan formally annexed the Ryukyus, Okinawa was
 a small semi-independent kingdom (it was a tribute-paying dependency of
 the daimiate of Satsuma in Japan) controlling the southern Ryukyus. The
 175 urban Naha-Shuri area served as the administrative and commercial center
 565 for the kingdom, and nearly all of the upper classes, gentry and nobility,
 were concentrated there. They formed a ruling class similar to that of
 [423] China, functioning as a literati and administrative bureaucracy. Feudalism
 had been abolished in the fifteenth century, and aside from a small per-
 centage of the nobility who were allowed to retain their hereditary fiefs,
 the bulk of the upper classes subsisted on pensions granted by the ruler.
 This group was very large and constituted approximately one-third of the
 total population.

175 The farming population lived in a state of serfdom, being forbidden
 [566] even to move from their native village or to change their hereditary occu-
 [36] pation. Farm villages were self-sustaining and physically isolated entities
 consisting of tightly-nucleated clusters of dwellings surrounded by fields.
 [62] Each village was segmented into several lineages whose houses were generally
 [613] clustered together; these kin groups were related through the male line and
 [614] shared a common ancestor, ritual observances, and often a local tomb for
 temporary burial. Each lineage was usually related to certain lineages of
 other villages, thus forming a larger relationship or patri-sib which shared
 a remote common ancestor, ritual observances, and a common tomb for perma-
 nent burial. Usually the membership of this larger kinship group was con-
 [582] centrated in the villages of a given district or area. Village endogamy
 was an obligatory marriage practice, and kin group endogamy was a preferred
 though not an obligatory practice.

178 Private ownership of land on Okinawa is a recent phenomenon, as
 423 recent, in fact, as the beginning of the twentieth century. Under the old
 175 kingdom communal ownership of the land obtained for all except a small seg-
 423 ment of the upper classes. In theory all land was the property of the ruler,
 • [632] but in practice the district, or majiri (political unit roughly equivalent

to the modern'son'), was the land-holding unit. The administration of the majiri supervised the distribution of land to the villages or mura (political unit equivalent to present-day 'ku') where it was divided among the various families. The amount of land allocated to a given family was dependent on its size, age and sex of members, and social position; consequently the houses of the nuru priestess and local officials received a proportionately larger allotment than the houses of ordinary farmers. The distribution of arable land under this system at the end of the nineteenth century was as follows: 67.1% farmers, 13% local lords, 8.3% nuru priestesses and local officials, 10.9% newly-cleared land.¹ The farmers worked the lands of all groups.

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The origin of this communal land allotment system ('jivari seido') lies deep in Okinawa's past far beyond the beginning of its recorded history. Redistributions were made periodically to compensate for changes in household size and fertility of holdings. These reallocations occurred at from four to thirty year intervals at the option of the local (majiri) administration, with the average being about every tenth year. Certain lands were excluded from redistribution, particularly the lands of the local lords. Usually the lands of the so-called yādui settlements made up of the younger sons of gentry families were also excluded. Newly-cleared land was placed in a special category in order to encourage land development; ordinarily it was treated as the private property of the family that cleared it and was not subject to reallocation. Despite these exceptions nearly 75% of the arable land was subject to periodic redistribution.

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Under this system the tax-bearing unit was the majiri, not the family. Each majiri was headed by a jiturei, an appointed official from Shuri, who functioned as an administrator, judge, and policeman; he was held responsible for the tax payment of his district and was subject to recall and punishment in the event of default. The state took no action against the family or household which failed to pay its tax; such matters were left to the jiturei and his assistants, who were free to deprive the offending family of all its lands if they saw fit. When a house defaulted, its lineage was held accountable and forced to make up the deficit; if the lineage was unable to meet its obligations, the entire village (mura) had to assume the responsibility. A marked feature of the old village was a number of granaries set aside for the community's annual tax levy.

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Land valuations were permanently fixed in 1610 when the daimyo of Satsuma had the region surveyed to determine the amount of tribute which could be extracted. There was no reassessment until after the annexation, although the overall tax levy was raised in 1635 and again in 1722. Only arable land was subject to taxation; no taxes were levied against house lots which were privately owned, nor against the forest and grass lands which were communal property. The tax levy for each majiri was based on the estimated productivity of its land at the time of the survey; it was a fixed tax and was never altered. It had been set so that in theory 40% of the yearly crop went to the government and 60% was to be retained by the

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¹ Higa, 1950, p. 64.

582 average age at the time of marriage, investigation into the registries re-
178 veals that the range has narrowed somewhat. Formerly some girls married at thirteen and fourteen; today this would be considered rather unusual.

[177] The Japanese administration attempted to discourage endogamous marriage practices, particularly kin-group endogamy. All agreed that the practice has declined; yet in Kanegusuku nearly 50% of all marriages were within the kin group and 66% of all marriages were within the village. An analysis of these figures on an age basis indicates the practice is declining there.

833 Sex It is said that sexual standards have changed in that there is
178 less sexual license among the young people and that they tend to have their
833 first relations at a later age than formerly. This is attributed in part to the moral training of the schools. Another factor seems to be the general decline of several informal village institutions which permitted young people considerable sexual freedom. One informant stated that those who continue on to high school and university generally have their first experience at a later age than those who attend only junior high school.

642 Government The Japanese introduced a modern system of government,
177 abolished the Okinawan aristocracy, and granted suffrage to all males of
641 twenty-five or more years. The American Civil Administration has attempted to liberalize laws and to make possible a greater degree of self-government.
[625] Police powers have been limited, universal suffrage has been introduced, and
[646] the number of elected officials has been increased.

621 To date there has been little change within the village, where
178 suffrage and office-holding remain limited to household heads. Villagers acknowledge that there is greater freedom for action at the local level today; yet they are not desirous of obtaining greater self-government. They feel that it would require too much of their time and that there is too little money available to finance its operation. Village leadership is virtually unchanged. Change where it has occurred has been initiated at a higher level.

632 At the township level the electorate has been broadened to include
178 all persons, male and female, over twenty years of age. The mayor who was formerly appointed is now elected to office.

771 Religion There has been a general decline in the indigenous Okinawan
177 religion, effected by Japanese policy, wartime attrition, and the spread of
178 education. Formerly a hierarchy of priestesses extended from the kin group
793 through the community and region to the person of the king's sister, the chief priestess. The Japanese removed the top echelons of this hierarchy, but the kin group and community priestesses continued to function. World War II resulted in the death of many religious functionaries, and as the office is usually hereditary within a specific family and often limited to a particular member of that family, there has often been no replacement for the office. Lastly there is an increasing tendency among the young people, due to the influence of the school, to regard religion as superstition.

796 Many villages, especially those without religious functionaries, have
178 discontinued all village ceremonies, and in those few remarkable exceptions